

**PROJECT INVESTIGATION:
Proposed Acquisition of Property at
Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park**

California Department of Parks and Recreation

August 1, 2002 (revised 8/9/02)

REGIONAL SETTING

Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park is located at the north side of the Fall River Valley in northeast Shasta County. The Fall River Valley is a broad, highly scenic valley surrounded by mountains, most notably Mt. Shasta and Mt. Lassen, California's premier snow-covered volcanoes. Agriculture (including forestry) and tourism are the two largest economic sectors in the region. Agricultural products include livestock (range and on irrigated pasture), wild rice, strawberry plants, mint, and alfalfa. The valley is a popular destination for fly fishing enthusiasts because of its many cold spring-fed rivers. Its fishing, scenic beauty, and rural lifestyle have made it a popular place for retirement and second homes. Pacific Gas and Electric owns much of the water rights to the Fall River and its tributaries, and the company controls their flows for operating the Pit 1 Hydro Power Plant. State Highway 299 passes through Fall River Mills (pop. 600) and McArthur (pop. 365), the valley's two principal towns.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The proposed 27.8-acre addition to Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park is located north of Eastman Lake on the Little Tule River. It is a new parcel ("Adjusted parcel E-1") that connects to the western boundary of the park. The property is surrounded by private land on all sides except where a portion touches the park (see map). The land is undeveloped except for a narrow forest road that passes through the property. The topography of the parcel is flat or gently sloped. The property's elevation is about 3310 feet above sea level.

Land use designations: The property is in the unincorporated area of Shasta County. Zoning is R-L (Limited Residential); general plan designation is RB (Rural Residential). Allowable and permitted land uses include single-family residences, day care facilities, bed-and-breakfast businesses, "cottage" industries, and agriculture. Lots have a 5-acre minimum.

Easements and encumbrances: Standard easements for power lines, telephone lines, and access roads encumber the proposed DPR property subject of this report. If and when the remaining Lava Creek Lodge property develops, there may be the need for greater access and utility easements (including sewer lines) over the property.

Biogeographic and cultural resource elements: An archeological survey done by Jensen & Associates for Lava Creek Lodge found no prehistoric resources on Lot "E-1." Geologically the property is basalt (lava) partly covered with a thin soil layer. Low areas that flood have thicker layers of wetland soils. About half the property is an Oregon white oak-western juniper-ponderosa pine woodland, and the rest is wetland (wet for most of the year) or annual grassland. Oregon ash, cattails, rushes, knotweeds, milkweed, and the like distinguish the wetlands. Purple loosestrife, a very invasive weed, is beginning to take hold in the wetlands. On the subject property there is little habitat in which sensitive species might be found. However, several such species are likely to occur within a few hundred yards of the property in or along Eastman Lake/Little Tule River.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The object for the proposed acquisition is to create additional access to Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park. DPR will get secure land access to the park in perpetuity once it takes possession of the subject property. Currently DPR can access the park using Island Road east of where it ceases to be a county road. The road crosses Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.) property, entering the state park just north of the old Horr ranch house. This access is under an agreement between DPR and B.I.A. that allows DPR use of the road for administrative purposes but not for public access, and the agreement expires on July 1, 2004.

SUPPORT AND FUNDING

Funding for the acquisition will come from the 2000 Park Bond's Opportunity Fund.

RECOMMENDATION

This report supports acquisition of the Lava Creek Lodge property as described in this report as an addition to Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park.

Sources and contacts: The information used in this report came from personal inspection, consultation with DPR headquarters and field staff (Warren Westrup, Pat Rogers, Mike Gross, Terry Pierson), Dept. of General Services staff (Stan Makris), Sharrah Dunlap Sawyer Engineers (Vicky Gibson-Eggen), from privileged real estate documents and DPR files, and from the Internet.